

REMARKS

In response to the Official Action dated December 9, 2002, Applicant amends the application and requests reconsideration. In the Amendment, claims 82-108 have been added, and claims 54-80 have been cancelled. No new matter has been added. Claims 24, 25 and 82-108 are now pending and under examination.

Regarding the objection to the formalities of the claims, Applicant has deleted claims 54-80 and renumbered them claims 82-108 with the proper order. Applicant believes that the application includes a reasonable number of claims (i.e. only 29 claims).

Claims 24, 25 and 54-80 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 0 580 382 in view of WO 96/33081. The rejection of claims 54-80 is rendered moot by the cancellation of the claims. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 24 and 25.

Regarding the flexible electrical connection limitation of claim 24, the Office Action alleged that WO 96/33081 discloses a pressure sensor 9 connected by a flexible lead, shown at 10 in the drawings. Based on this allegation, the Office Action stated that it would have been obvious to use the pressure sensor and lead in the valve of EP 0 580 382 to simplify construction.

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Office Action's assertion that reference numeral 10 designates a flexible lead in WO 96/33081. As described in US 6,007,162, which issued from the US national phase of WO 96/33081, reference numeral 10 actually designates a printed circuit board (not a flexible lead), which contains the electric or electronic components of the pressure sensor (1). The capacitive transducer (9) of the pressure sensor (9) is connected to the printed circuit board (10) via rigid contact pins (16). There is no disclosure in US 6,007,162 that the pressure transducer (1) or the capacitive transducer (9) is connected to another component with a flexible electrical connection. Therefore,

the flexible electrical connection limitation of claim 24 is not disclosed by WO 96/33081.

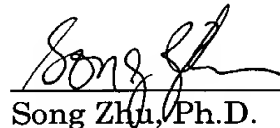
In conclusion, claim 24 is not rendered obvious by EP 0 580 382 and WO 96/33081, because its flexible electrical connection limitation is not taught or suggested by the references. Consequently, the dependent claims (claims 25 and 82-108) are also patentable.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application is considered to be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #1662/49745).

Respectfully submitted,

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